Watches—How to Select and How to Take Care of Them.

FOR the following sensible remarks upon watches we are indebted to Mr. R. Houdin, a Frenchman:

We have always observed the embarrassment under which persons labor in buying a watch. In most cases, and for very obvious reasons, this piece of business assumes serious proportions. In fact it is not a mere jewel or toy, which fashion or caprice may cause us to continually change, but rather a faithful or devoted servant, which is long to be attached to our persons.

The watchmaker to whom we may go when purchasing a watch should possess two essential qualities—honesty and knowledge; honesty alone affords no sufficient guarantee. In fact, the vender who has not the requisite experience to be a judge of a watch is compelled to trust to others, who may deceive him; thus he may deceive you while deceiving himself.

The following advice may prove serviceable to those who have to rely on their own unassisted judgment in selecting a watch: First, while adhering to taste and elegance, choose a watch thick enough. In a watch too thin or too little, the parts are too feeble, and have not sufficient space to work well. Watches as large as a penny piece, or those that are about as thin as a fourpenny piece, are mere experiments of skill, which should rather be regarded as masterpieces of patience, from which there is more vanity than utility to be derived. Second, avoid in watches that construction which fashion has often prescribed, but which good sense condemns—such as those that point the days of the month, and so forth. These extra pieces necessitate additional parts, which occasion friction, and incumber a space already too limited; though here it may be observed that complicated watches, such as chronometers, repeaters, etc., are now brought to a high state of perfection, at, of course, a correspondingly high cost. Third, do not allow yourself to be attracted by the supposed advantages of new escapements. In watches for ordinary purposes, the lever and the horizontal escapements are generally adopted as giving the best results. Fourth, the watchmaker who is conscientious will point out to you the limits beyond which a watch ceases to have the qualities necessary to go well. A watch procured for the design of its case may be covered or set with chasing or gems; it is then simply a jewel; but that which is bought for its utility ought to be as plain as possible, and this plainness itself is, as a rule, a distinguishing characteristic of its good quality.

We will now say a few words as to what we ought to do, and what we ought to avoid, to preserve a watch in good condition. Having obtained a really serviceable article, you should, in order to produce results, follow out these rules: Wind up your watch every day at the same hour. This is generally done at the hour we retire to rest; or perhaps, better still, at the hour we rise. Avoid putting a watch on a marble slab or near anything excessively cold. The sudden transition from heat to cold contracting the metal, may sometimes cause the mainspring to break. Indeed, the cold coagulates the oil; and the wheel-work and pivots working less freely, affects the regularity of the timekeeper. When we lay our watch aside we ought to slope it on a watch-case, so as to keep it nearly in the same position as it has in the pocket. In laying aside your watch be sure that it *rests* on its case, as by suspending it free, the action of the balance may cause oscillation, which may considerably interfere with its going. If you would keep your watch clean, you must be quite sure that the case fits firmly, and never put it in any pocket but one made of leather. Those pockets which are lined with cloth, cotton or calico give, by the constant friction, a certain quantity of fluff, which enters most watches, even those the cases of which shut firmly. If the watch is not a "keyless" one, the key should be small, in order that we may feel the resistance of the stop-work; then we can stop in time without forcing anything. It is also necessary that the square of the key should correspond with that of the watch. If it be too large, it may in a short time cause the wind-up square to suffer from undue wear and tear, the rectifying of which is rather expensive. The hands of an ordinary watch can be turned backward without much risk. It is, however, always better to move the hands forward to adjust your watch to correct time.

Watches, by reason of their fragile construction, and the variations to which they are liable, can, after all, only obtain a limited perfection in their performance; therefore we must not be astonished to find them subject to certain variations. These variations, which are easy to correct, need not prejudice the quality of a watch, as will be proved by the following example: Two watches, we will suppose, have been put to the same time by an excellent regulator. At the end of a month, one of these watches is a quarter of an hour too fast; the other is exactly right to time. To which of these two watches would we give the preference? Perhaps to the one which is exactly right. But in making such a choice, we nevertheless incur the risk of abandoning a good watch for a bad one. The first watch has, we assume, gained thirty seconds a day; and according to this rate, it has gained a quarter of an hour in thirty days. What must be done to make this watch go well? Alter the regulator inside from fast to slow, or get a careful watchmaker to do it for you, thereby altering its daily rate. Let us now admit that the other watch has been affected during a month by irregular going, which has occasioned it sometimes to gain, at other times to lose to a certain extent daily. It may easily occur that at the end of a month this gaining and losing compensate each other, and by this means the watch indicates the exact hour at the time we look at it. Such a watch can never be relied on.

The fact is, that a watch which gains in a *regular* manner or loses in a regular manner is superior to any whose variation is uncertain; and where its variation comes to be familiar, the little companion may vie with the most delicately adjusted ship's chronometer.

A skillful watchmaker one day thus reasoned with a customer who complained of his watch. "You complain," said he, "that your watch gains a minute a month. Well, then, you will congratulate yourself when you have heard me. You are aware that in your watch the balance, which is the regulator, makes five oscilations every second, which is 482,000 a day; so that your watch, exposed to all the vicissitudes which heat and cold occasion it, the varying weight of the air, and the shaking to which it is subjected, has not varied more than a minute a month, or two seconds a day. It has only acquired with each vibration of the balance a variation of the 216,000th part of a second. Judge then what must be the extreme perfection of the mechanism of this watch!"

A watch can not go for an indefinite period without being repaired or cleaned. At the expiration of a certain time the oil dries up, dust accumulates, and wear and tear are the inevitable results to the whole machinery, the functions becoming irregular and frequently ceasing to act altogether. A person possessing a watch of good quality and desirous of preserving it as such, should have it cleaned every two years at least. But care should be taken to confide this cleaning or repairing to careful hands; an incapable workman may do great injury to a watch even of the simplest construction.

There is in the generality of watches a regulator for fast and slow, with a movable index. The two words, "Fast" and "Slow" engraved at each end of this regulator, leave no doubt as to which way the index should be moved in order to make the watch lose or gain. It is easily understood that, if the watch gain, the index should be pushed toward the slow; and when it loses toward the fast. This operation should be performed with a good deal of care and attention, in consequence of the susceptibility and fragility of these regulating pieces. It would be impossible to give any information as to the effect existing between the degrees of this regulator and the variations of the watch; it is, therefore, only by trial that we can arrive at the precise point at which to bring the time to its fullest accuracy. When a watch varies only a little, we content ourselves with pushing the index one degree. We then wait twenty-four hours to judge of the effect, and act according to the result obtained. In the event of the variation being greater, for instance, than ten minutes in advance in a day, we ought to push the index to the end of the "slow," even if we have to retrace our steps the next day; but if in this state the watch gained again, it would be necessary for the watchmaker himself to undertake the regulation of it.

It would be useless to attempt to correct a variation of one or two seconds in a day, or a minute in a month. Even suppose the going of such a watch did not vary more than a second a day, this would be perfect enough, as it would be extremely difficult to produce a correction slight enough for an error so trifling. The difference of time can generally be adjusted by a comparison with mean time as registered daily in nearly every large city; or, as we have already said, if the watch be regular in its habits of irregularity, it is virtually equivalent to a perfect time-keeper.—*Chambers's Journal.*

An Overland Drive from Indiana to Washington Territory.

WILLIAM MAJOR and Alexander Kirkpatrick left Jasper County, Indiana, on the 31st day of March, 1880, destined for Puget Sound, with a stout pair of mules and a comfortable covered wagon. They arrived at New Tacoma on the evening of September 14th, having made the entire distance with the same mules and wagon—time, 167 days. The route traveled was by way of Burlington, Ia.; thence to Plattsmouth, on the Missouri River; thence through Nebraska and across the Platte at Old Fort Kearney; up the Platte and the south branch thereof to Julesburg; parallel with the Union Pacific Railroad to Rawlins, thence along the old emigrant road through Wyoming, south of the Black Hills mining region, crossing Idaho to the mouth of the Malheur River in Eastern Oregon. On this long and tedious trip, Messrs. Major and Kirkpatrick fell in with a great many emigrants traveling in the same direction. At the outset the boys comprehended the distance, journeyed slowly, and were left behind by those in haste to reach their destination; but as the months wore on they left those far in the rear who hurried onward at the start. Grass was found poor along the entire route, and game scarce. Major and Kirkpatrick are here to examine and report upon the country, both as to climate and resources, and if the accounts they send home are favorable a large number of well-to-do people in Jasper County, tired of hot summers and cold winters, will seek homes in Western Oregon.—*New Tacoma (W. T.) Ledger.*

Brigham Young's Widows.

THIRTEEN of the widows of Brigham Young still live in the Lion House at Salt Lake. Their shares of the estate were $21,000 each, according to the will, but by threatening litigation they obtained about $10,000 more. They receive, however, only the income from their property; but that is sufficient to give them excellent fare in the old home, with servants, horses, and $75 a month in money. Louise, one of daughters of the Prophet by Emiline Free, the most intellectual and intelligent of the wives, says that all of her full brothers and sisters have renounced polygamy; but a majority of Young's forty-seven children are Mormons. Speaking of the household as it used to be, she says: "We lived very happily. My father's ruling hand had a good deal to do with it. He taught us to love one another. Every morning wives and children met in the parlor, where we had prayers and singing. People have often asked me how in the world Young knew all of his children and wives, but I can tell you if a single one was missing at prayers he knew it, and found out where he or she was. Our house was like a great hotel, and we the guests. Our father was a great manager, and very practical in superintending his household affairs. Our rooms opened into a long hall, like the one in the hotel here, but larger, and when we wanted anything from sisters, brothers, or wives, we want into this room or that at will."

The Cruelty With Which the Nihilists are Treated.

A SHORT account of the celebrated casemates of the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, in which the Nihilists are confined immediately after their arrest, will, I have no doubt, be perused with interest by our readers. The writer, a St. Petersburg correspondent of the London *Telegraph* obtained access to the casemates by a special order from one of the Grand Dukes, whose name he naturally suppresses. The sight of the order when presented, was by no means acceptable to the commandant of the fortress, but as it was peremptory, he had no alternative but to comply.

The casemates, it appears, are hollowed out under the Neva, and directly under the ramparts. Their only window, a little square hole, protected by a thick barred grating, rises but a few inches above the level of the river. A staircase of about ten steps leads down to them, and as the aid-de-camp who acted as guide remarked, in a jocular tone: "Many go down, but few come up again." It would seem that the climate is not favorable to revolutionists. At stated distances there are iron doors opening into halls filled with sentinels, who, with loaded rifle and fixed bayonet, keep watch and ward over the unhappy tenants of the cells which open upon them. The doors of the cells, also of iron, are very low.

As for the tiny prisons, they are very narrow quarters, square, with stone walls and floors, and fearfully damp, the water constantly dropping about in all directions. A chair, a table and a pallet of white wood form the only furniture. One of the pallets was found to be covered with a bed of straw horribly foul, but even this, poor luxury as it was, must be considered an exception. The prisoners, the writer learned, were fed on a soup made of salted cabbage and black bread. On grand occasions, however, they were sometimes treated to a bit of meat and a tcharka, or glassful of brandy.

The visitor was allowed entrance to a few of the cells. Their tenants were pale; they rose as he entered, according to order, but regarded him with a fixed look of despair. On some of the walls characters had been traced with a pointed instrument. One of the phrases ran thus:

"My poor mother, you doubtless know that your innocent son is buried alive in this vault."

The guide interfered and prevented the writer from reading more. He was shown the great cell in which was incarcerated the Princess Tarskanova, daughter of the Empress Elizabeth, who fell a victim to her rival, the Empress Catharine II., grandmother of the present Czar. This unhappy woman perished in the cell under the most dramatic circumstances. The Neva, swollen by the melted snow, suddenly rose, and the rushing torrent, dashing with overwhelming strength against the tiny window, broke it and filled the cell with water. The Princess was drowned.

The cells of the great State criminals are lined with mattresses, and rings of iron are fixed in the walls, to which many of them are bound when they are not straight-waist-coated. The guide informed the writer, among other things, that these unhappy men were asked every quarter of an hour if they were present. Whenever they failed to reply they were barbarously punished. He also states that in the wall of the Emperor's room there is an invisible door, communicating with an invisible passage, very narrow, and leading to a subterranean gallery, hollowed out under the Neva. The gallery leads to the fortress, and in case of a revolution or of imminent peril, the Czar could disappear in a few seconds from the Winter Palace, and a few minutes after find himself in perfect safety in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, the guns of which could in a short time reduce St. Petersburg to ruins.

The palace of the Czar Paul I., which is now the Engineer's School, was similarly provided; but when the assassins entered his room, he had not time to flee, and was struck down at the very moment when he was about to disappear behind the secret door, which was already open.

Singing and Dancing Girls.

OF the queer callings to be noticed is that of the "Geysha," or singing and dancing girl. Geyshas may be hired at a few minutes' notice in all the great towns of the Empire. As a rule, they are comely, modest damsels, although in obedience to the refined taste of a certain class of foreigners, a school possessing as little of one quality as of the other has sprung up. To the ceremonial feasts of rich men singing and dancing girls are the invariable appendages, and are not unfrequently treated rather as guests than as hired servants. As a rule they perform in pairs, one playing the guitar while the other sings or dances; but quartets and choruses may be had for payment. It is never etiquette to treat them as professionals; the hint for performing should be given incidentally, and on no account is the payment for their services to be made openly, but is to be pushed under their rice-bowl in a piece of paper, so that it is discovered as it were by accident. With the Geyshas proper often come the dancing girls, so-called, although "posturers" would be a more correct expression, inasmuch as Japanese dancing consists entirely of a series of graceful ankle and hand-twisting positions, quite independent of any musical accompaniment. Good singing and dancing girls earn large sums of money, and famous ones must be booked beforehand; but in their performances, whether of singing or posturing, there is very little to charm the European sense, and a very few minutes suffices to render the performance very boring.—*All the Year Round.*

IT is but a little more than a hundred years since a candidate for the decree of Master of Arts at Harvard took the affirmative on a paper gravely discussing the question, "When the shadow went back on the sun-dial of Hezekiah, did the shadows go back on all sun-dials?"

SOME Chinamen fitted up boats and made a contract with the canning firms to fish for salmon off British Columbia. The boats drifted empty ashore on the day after, and the Chinamen were never afterward seen. The white fishermen had murdered them.

Our Young Folks.

ANNA AND ELLA AND THE "FONDLIN'."

"I THINK I'll leave her asleep here—it is so cool and pleasant, and I'll hear her if she cries. She's sure to sleep two hours, she always does—dear little rosebud! There never was a baby like her!" So baby's carriage was left on the front piazza with baby lying fast asleep in it.

Young Mrs. Hall stood a moment at the door before going to her room, and congratulated herself at being nearly settled, for they had just moved to the village. "I will rest for fifteen minutes, and then dress for papa, and come down here to sit by baby till she wakes."

Two hours later the young mother woke with a start from the sound sleep into which she had fallen. "My baby!" was her first thought, "but she must be asleep, or I would have heard her." Not a moment was lost, for though she would not acknowledge it to herself, Mrs. Hall was very uneasy. Down she ran, saying, to reassure herself, "What a nervous little woman I am! One would think this was my first baby instead of my third." As she stepped out on the piazza it felt empty and deserted, and—where was the carriage?

She ran around to the kitchen—Bridget had heard her darling and taken her, carriage and all. "Give me the baby, Bridget," she called, "I'm ready for her."

"The baby, mum! Shure, I've niver heard a sound of her but wanst this afternoon! She was crying pretty hard, but my hands was in the dough, and I heard you wheel her on the front piazza, and then she was quite quiet."

Mrs. Hall sank down on the steps. "O, Bridget, it was not me! Baby is gone!"

"Oh, shure you're fuling, mum! Who'd take the baby?"

The poor mother could only burst into tears; then with a feeling that something must be done, she sent Bridget on one side and she went the other, to ask the neighbors if they had seen any one taking the baby off. But every one had been sitting with closed blinds or sleeping, and not one had heard or seen the darling. Poor little mother! It seemed impossible to meet her husband and the two boys, who were coming home that night after a long visit at grandmamma's.

How the time went by Mrs. Hall never knew, till John and the boys came and heard the dreadful tidings.

"Depend upon it, you'll get her back," said John, hoping no one would be so foolish as to mention Charlie Ross just then. "If she were older it would be different, but she'll cry and raise a row, and they'll bring her back. I'll have posters all over the village before nine o'clock, and we'll find her before morning."

Up and down the street all were talking on the same subject. "Those new people, you know, that have moved into the Kirby cottage. They've lost their baby!"

"Why, shocking! How did it happen?"

"Left it on the front piazza!"

"Well! Who ever thought," etc., etc.

The Halls might have lived for years in the village with hardly a friend, for it was noted as a place where strangers were treated in anything but a cordial manner, but her sorrow and agony drew out every one's tenderness, and each tried to comfort and help find the little one. But—what comfort could one give?

"I would so much rather she had died," moaned the poor mother.

"Don't say that, Nellie," said her husband. "I can't feel quite desperate. She's such a cunning little morsel—somebody that was baby-hungry has kept her awhile; but we'll get her back, please God, safe and sound."

CHAPTER II.

"If only we had a baby—dolls ain't any good, they're such make-believes!" and Ella dragged her beloved Susy Ann by one arm through the dust as if she despised her.

"And we could wheel a baby in a carriage. Pshaw! there's plenty of babies that haven't any mothers. Ma might get one of 'em."

"But I don't believe she'd buy a carriage—you know she never can aflord anything nowadays."

"I don't care! If I could find a baby that didn't belong to anybody, I'd take it home, and when mother once saw it she'd keep it."

On trudged the two little girls. They were going nowhere in particular. Anna, the oldest, loved to stroll off to the new and prettier part of the village, and as Ella was Anna's devoted follower, she went on unquestioningly. Suddenly both children stopped and listened. "It's a baby!" said Anna, enthusiastically.

"It is, sure's anything! And the poor little thing's crying! Let's find it."

Following the sound, the children turned down a side street, and then saw that the sobs and cries proceeded from a pretty little baby carriage on the piazza of the second house.

"Poor little thing! Let's go and speak to her," said Ella. The baby, at sight of the two little sunbonnets, stopped crying and smiled, stretching out her hands.

"Oh, the dear little thing! Let's wheel her a little." Back and forth the children rolled her, and baby, soothed by the motion, dropped into another doze.

"Ella," said Anna, "I mean to take this baby home!"

"Oh, Anna! 'Tain't yours!"

Anna had some uneasy questionings of her own, but she stifled them. "I don't care! The folks here don't want her, or they wouldn't leave her crying out on the stoop. She's a 'fondlin',' I do b'lieve!"

Ella had never heard of foundlings, but Anna's tone carried conviction with it. "Anyhow we can just give her a little ride and bring her back. You see if anybody cared, they wouldn't let us do this. You just lift the front wheels, and I'll get her down on the sidewalk. There! Ain't she just lovely? And what a pretty carriage!"

"If they don't want the baby, anyhow they wouldn't give us the carriage."

"I tell you we're only going to show her to mother, so hold your tongue!"

Ah, Anna's voice was not often as sharp as that, and somehow though they had the baby and the beautiful carriage, the children were not half as happy as they expected. It was a long walk home, for they lived at the very other end of the village, and by the time they had reached the little cottage baby was awake and beginning to feel hungry, giving impatient little cries, and looking piteously into the strange brown eyes that looked out of the white sunbonnets, instead of the bright blue ones she longed to see. To crown their perplexities mamma was out when they arrived home, and when they lifted baby out of her carriage she cried aloud from fright and hunger.

"Oh, dear! If mother'd only come!" sighed Ella, while Anna began to wish she had not been so very sure the baby was a foundling—her clothes did not look as if she were neglected!

In the midst of baby's loudest screams Mrs. Reed came home, and heard with consternation of what her little girls had done. The first thing was to make the poor little stranger comfortable, and that took time. By-and-by, after she had swallowed a cup of arrow-root, baby sat up and cooed and laughed. In spite of her anxiety on the mother's account, Mrs. Reed and the little girls enjoyed a few moments of the sweet baby talk, but soon the mother, remembering what agony that other mother must be suffering, said:

"Now, Anna, you and Ella must go straight to the house you took the baby from, and tell them where she is. I will keep her quiet till you come back. Make haste now, for the mother must be nearly dead with fright. Are you sure you know the house?"

"Oh yes, mother! It was a gray house with brown blinds and a low stoop—only two steps up—and the folks had been moving, for there was a big box"—

"Well, well! Only hurry off. Go as fast as you can."

Off went the children, Ella half crying at leaving the baby, but Anna too well aware of the mischief she had done to care for anything half so much as to find the poor mother. "This is the quickest way," she said, and hurried on. Her very anxiety confused her, and after a long walk she could find no such house as she had described to her mother. At almost every corner one or the other would think they saw a gray house or a big box on the sidewalk, so they turned and twisted till they were fairly bewildered, and at last, after walking for nearly two hours, they reached home, and with sobs and cries told their mother they could not find the right house.

The baby was asleep again, and Mrs. Reed, without waiting to give the children their supper or eat herself, started out. She inquired of several people if they had heard of a lost baby, but they were at the very further end of the town, and the news had not reached them.

"The paper comes out to-morrow—I'll advertise," thought the widow, and then hurried to the office of the *Democrat and Eagle*.

As she entered a gentleman was coming out. "I'll pay double," he was saying, "to have the posters all over the village by nine o'clock. I promised my wife, who is half crazy"—

"Oh, sir," cried Mrs. Reed, "is it her baby?"

"Yes, do you know anything?"

"I have it safe and sound."

"Thank God! Come home with me"—and seizing Mrs. Reed's hand, Mr. Hall thrust her into a carriage, and ordered the coachman to drive full speed for home.

In another half hour Mrs. Hall was standing between the two penitent little girls, with her baby in her arms. Mr. Hall and Mrs. Reed would have punished Anna, but Mrs. Hall insisted that she was as much to blame for leaving her baby on the front stoop, and that it was punishment enough for the poor little girls to have their "fondlin'" taken from them.

The happy father and mother lay awake almost all night, too excited to sleep, and there in the darkness Mr. Hall told his wife that he was going to bring home a nurse for baby.

"Oh, John, if you'll only trust me again! I'm nurse enough. I don't like a great Irish girl—you can't trust them."

"Oh, I don't mean an Irish girl, my dear," said John, with a queer smile which in the darkness his wife could not see.

CHAPTER III.

"I wan't a dog I can trust—that has been trained to watch a thing, and not let any one but its owner touch it."

"Ere's your hanimal! A better critter never was found. Watch that, Dash!" said the dog fancier, throwing a glove on the ground. "Now, sir, you try to pick that up."

Mr. Hall stooped, but a fierce, low growl, evidently with plenty of bite behind it, warned him off.

"Take care of that till I come back, Dash," and the two left the dog alone. After a saunter through the building they came back to find Dash sitting motionless beside the glove.

"Is he fond of children.

"Yes, sir but most of all a baby. You see, he was brought up with a baby, sir. They were poor folks, but it most killed 'em to sell Dash, only I paid a good price for him, and they needed money badly."

"What do you ask?"

"Seventy-five dollars."

After a little bargaining Mr. Hall walked off, and that evening baby was shown her new nurse. Mamma and the boys were delighted, while poor Dash seemed to think his first baby had come back, and barked and whined for joy.

All through the hot summer baby took her naps on the shady piazza, but close by her carriage lay her big black dog, and no stranger dare step near the sleeping infant. Two little girls, though, often came and played with the dog and baby, and Anna and Ella had many a happy afternoon with "Anna's Fondlin'," as Mr. Hall called baby Belle.—*Hope Ledyard, in Examiner and Chronicle.*

MR. JAMES W. MACKEY, the bonanza millionnaire, is a collector of agates. When Mrs. Hayes and her traveling companions inspected Mrs. Mackey's collection, during their visit to Virginia City, Nev., they each received a handsome specimen as a present.